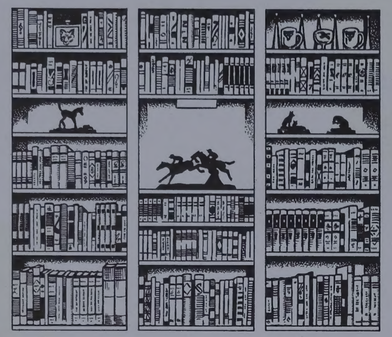

SPLUTTERINGS
OF A
SPORTING PEN



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SPLUTTERINGS OF A SPORTING PEN



BY

S.T. RICHARDSON

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THE MEET AT HEIGHINGTON

This is a favourite meet with the men of Lord Zetland's hunt, foxes abound in the neighbouring covers, & the country is stiff enough to satisfy the fire eaters of the chase who sticking to their saddles some with their knees & some with their hands, go like mad over every obstacle. On this day the village is quite en fete the oldest inhabitant & the rest of the villagers turn out & gaze with rapture upon the gay throng of men, horses, & hounds, assembled upon the Green for their Refection



CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

From Herghington a mare having been made to Redworth whin, the lady pack were soon in cover but hardly had the last hound leapt in when a sudden burst of music announced that they had got upon the trail of an old customer; then with a crash they left the cover on the far side heading straight for Redworth Stell, in a trice Champion was with them getting his blood horse by the head he followed the flying pack at lightening speed towards the Stell

REDWORTH STELL

Here the flying field were brought to their haunches, only one or two places being negotiable; some horses were more anxious to have it than their riders & vice versa, Other nags would have had it at any price, any where or on the back of anyone, these were restrained with difficulty but eventually all got over somehow in safety.



A LORDLY DILEMMA

There are some men who ought not to be allowed to hunt, they are those men who cannon up against anyone when ever they have a chance: this it came to pass that just as a noble lord was about to jump a fence into a road he was rudely bombarded from behind & precipitated into the lane another noble lord coming up at that moment & not observing the dilemma cleared both horse & rider landing safely on terra firma



When you hunt with the 'bitches,'
Beware of blind ditches,
And take care you're not baffled,
By your horse when unsnaffled,

Or you may be left sitting,
Whilst your horse goes a-flitting,
And pursuit becomes rate,
Though you're hold of the bridle,

A DOWNER

Look out sir, dont you see me sir! why dont you stay at home sir! such were the interrogations which arose from a fallen rider behind a fence, but they came too late the grey horse had already started upon his apparently murderous career, but fortunately landed just clear of the prostrate one who happily was uninjured although slightly ruffled & naturally so.—



A SPORTING COW

There is an instinctive love of sport in the bosoms of some, which notwithstanding early training in a contrary direction cannot be eradicated. a curious example of this was forthcoming not long since when a milch cow joined in the pursuit of a fox, fired as it seemed by a desire to be in the first flight, taking fence & ditch, in her stride, till one ditch deeper than the rest swallowed up her hind legs & so cut short her career

GOING TO THE MEET

There's nought in life so sweet,
As going to a meet,
(Except the glorious fun
Of a straight & clinking run,)

One drives there with a team,
Most regal this I deem,
One man is seen whose horse
Steers there a backward course,

Again a better weight,
Bestrides a cob sedate,
All hunting-keyed inclined
If only hounds can find.



THE MEET AT WALWORTH

A meet, always a beautiful sight to a well regulated mind, is doubly enhanced in beauty when it takes place at one of the fine ancestral seats of the district, such for instance as Walworth castle where the ancient vied battlements of the castle & the ancient trees form a pleasing background before which the scarlet coats, sleek horses & well bred hounds show off to the greatest advantage.



AT THE COVER SIDE

At the cover side all kinds of little pecutrarities show themselves in the horses there assembled, One horse will kick cheerfully & continuously, another will strike out viciously aiming to do grevious bodily injury, Others take a delight in tacking against their neighbours which has not an improving effect upon tops & leathers & may cause strong language, but your real hunter who knows his business & has manners, will stand like a statue with his eye fixed upon the cover & his ears in a listening attitude looking as sensible as a Christian



GETTING AWAY FROM COVER

What a cheerful feeling fills the bosom when you get away on good terms with the hounds, especially when you know that there are about sixty men coffeehousing on the other side of the cover regardless of the fact that the fox has gone away & that you are in for a screamer, even the man on the hot horse who has chosen this side of the cover because it was quiet, now consoles himself with the thought that the time is coming when he will be able to take his nags back down, & give him a good quilting into the bargain

VAGARIES OF A SECOND HORSEMAN

When your horse has rolled over with you into a ditch & there left you, it does not add much to the placidity of your temper to see your second horseman cheerfully riding over the top of you & taking as much out of your horse as possible, utterly oblivious to all but self

THE BIG CHESTNUT BANCO

Few horses in the Zetland hunt professed a greater love of hunting than a certain big chestnut, who could scarcely be held during the first part of the run & seemed evermore to sniff the battle from afar," but this is as he appeared after a quick burst of forty minutes over Leady Park, taking no further interest in the hunt.



A MEET OF THE SOUTH DURHAM AT RUSHEYFORD

"Rushey-ford in olden days was celebrated for its posting facilities & here about one hundred horses were kept for coaching purposes, but since the South Durham country was hunted by the present master the stables have been converted into Kennels & the past glory of the ancient inn is all but forgotten but, floreat scientia" as the immortal Mr Jorrocks would say.

CUT DOWN and HUNG UP TO DRY

"Cut down & hung up to dry" is all very pleasant and amusing for your horse who lightened of his load goes on his way rejoicing brutally regardless of the fact that his late rider is fast impaled in an impenetrable bullfinch apparently settled in for the night



MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE

Beware of "Clowbeck,"
Or your sport it may check.
For holes prevail here,
Both deep ones & queer

Where both rider & co's.
May subside with a bloo
So take warning I pray,
When you hunt Clowbeck may,

And cross 'neath the tree,
There from peril you're free,
And in safety may go
Without getting below.

A PULLER IN A HOLD

Few things are more obnoxious than to be mounted upon a rushing headstrong horse in a mood, regardless of consequences he hurries you onward, utterly impervious to the oaths of the huntsman, the reprimands of the master, or the close proximity of the largest subscriber with every probability that you kill some one, or very likely yourself or may hap a valuable hound much worse for you, the only thing to be done is to get out of the mood & to stay out



A GOOD 'UN AT TIMBER

Horses have various ways of doing a timber jump, some horses fly the whole thing at the rate of forty miles an hour, other horses will take it standing, whilst others attempt to rush through the obstacle which if not weak enough to break an imperial crowner is the result, but there are only few horses that will deliberately walk through a stiff flight of posts & rails, in the way that a big chestnut did last season, kindly liberating many of the imprisoned field thereby, who are not like the look of the 'coop.'



A KILL NEAR HARTFORTH

'Twas a sweltering day towards the end of March Horses hounds & men were all pretty well battel'd when after a run of fifty seven minnites the death whoop sounded in the pleasant shade of Hartforth wood over an old customer who was not brought to book until much patient & scientific research had been displayed by the huntsman over a trying line, mostly composed of plough which the proverbial pick of march dust did not improve



A CROWNER

Never ride a strange hired horse in a plain snaffle, especially if he has been hired from a plausible methodist. An 'imperial crowner' was the result of neglecting this, last season, as soon as a move was made to cover. The horse in the plain snaffle became unmanageable & charged at his fence landing on his head as did also his rider whose boot (off side) was torn off & mistaken by one of the field for the fox. a view holloa was given but fortunately not regarded by the hounds as it was observed just in time that there was no brush attached.



A PARENT AND HIS FAMILY IN PERIL

Sometimes a whole family will be placed hors de combat, in the hunting field by one of those unforseen accidents which are liable to befal all those who indulge in the knigty pleasures of the chase: Here was a parent all anxiety to assist his fallen offspring (who was reaping in a ditch) hurrying out of the saddle fell prone upon the earth; whilst his steed after a short period of contemplation bolted



ADDING INSULT TO INJURY

It is quite discouraging enough to be landed head foremost in a bog when you imagined that you were jumping upon sound ground without being informed by the huntsman in sarcastic tones that "it serves you right" for trying to head the hounds, but the hunting field is not the place where you look for sympathy

GIVING HIS HORSE A LEAD

Many & divers are the ways of getting over a fence, some horses go first leaving their riders behind, whilst other horses send their riders on in advance & remain themselves behind, but the real way to ease a horse in going over a fence is to leave, say two yards of daylight between yourself & the saddle, as you are almost certain to land somewhere on the right side of the fence which is after all the main thing in hunting

THE WORK AT NEASHAM HALL

After airing of about 20 minutes, our fox endeavoured to conceal himself amongst the laurels at Neasham, but was speedily ejected & rolled over & devoured close by the hall door whilst the obsequies were going on various beverages made their appearance, whereat the thirsty field rejoiced greatly, & many were the hopes expressed that the present sporting master might long carry the horn

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